

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, last week was Teacher Appreciation Week, and I missed my opportunity to pay my respect to a favorite teacher we have in my district in Coppell, Texas. Duane Masengill teaches world geography and current events.

Duane drives 25 miles to work every day. While that puts an extra burden on his family, his wife Jennifer says she does not mind because he is so happy doing what he does.

I have had the opportunity to visit Duane and his students. I have seen the rapport he has with his students.

Duane, while you still need a haircut, and I think the youngsters will agree with me, you are in fact a devoted teacher.

I always believe that we can tell a great deal about the quality of the effort, the quality of the commitment made by a teacher when we see the quality of morale and preparation when we stand before a classroom. Duane's students are always bright, energetic, enthusiastic, and able. They quiz us hard.

So, Duane, let me just say congratulations. Some people spend a lifetime building a career. You are spending a career building lifetimes.

BRING GOD BACK TO OUR SCHOOLS AND OUR NATION

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, a Federal court ruled in Texas that a school program that allowed clergy that counsel troubled students was unconstitutional. Another Federal court ruled that a Florida policy of allowing prayer at graduation ceremonies was unconstitutional. Unbelievable.

These book-smart, street-stupid judges better look in the mirror of a troubled America, because it is clear, students can be counseled by convicts in our schools, not clergy. Students can read about devil worship, not God. Students can burn a flag at a school, but cannot say a prayer. Beam me up.

It is time to amend the Constitution of this country and not only bring God back into the schools, but bring God back into our Nation.

MARRIAGE IS A GOOD THING; ABOLISH MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

(Mr. SCHAFFER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, marriage is a good thing. This Congress has an historic opportunity to do something it should have done long ago, abolish the marriage tax penalty.

Many young couples are surprised to learn the government actually penalizes people for getting married an average of \$1,400 per year for middle income families.

The people have long known the government does a lot of foolish things. Even liberals have to admit the government has thousands of stupid taxes and regulations, programs that actually make things worse instead of better, and inefficiencies that seem to be immune to reform.

The marriage tax penalty is just so wrong that it stands among the ugliest symbols of everything wrong about a government that is too big, too arrogant, and too oblivious to the concerns of the average people who struggle every day to get ahead, make ends meet, and raise their children in peace.

Why does the government make it so much harder for people who want to get married? I urge Members on both sides of the aisle to right this terrible wrong. It is high time we abolish the tax on marriage.

IN HONOR OF CZECH REPUBLIC AND POLAND FOR CONDEMNING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CUBA

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, tonight the Cuban American community honors the Czech Republic and Poland for their recent successful efforts to condemn the ongoing human rights violations in Cuba before the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

The Czech President said recently that both the Czechs and the Cubans encountered similar political fates, suffering the multiple adverse effects of the same ideology still advanced by the government of Cuba.

The Center for a Free Cuba event tonight will also serve to commemorate Cuban independence, which will be celebrated during the month of May, and the role of women in the struggle for freedom in Cuba.

Because of that, Elena Diaz Verson Amos will be honored for her commitment to the cause of freedom and democracy and human rights.

I urge my colleagues to join us tonight at 6 p.m. in room 106 of the Dirksen building for the Center for Free Cuba reception.

NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE

(Mr. WICKER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress, we have an obligation to report that the United States is vulnerable to a missile attack. That is right. Some of the world's most dangerous and unstable dictatorships are developing weapons which could reach the United States mainland.

The bipartisan Rumsfeld Commission has said we could soon face a missile strike with little or no warning. Yet, our President is still reluctant to act on this important issue.

The North Korean missile tests last summer forced administration officials to admit grudgingly that this threat is real. But the President's response has been weak. It includes support for only a limited ground-based system with questionable value. The administration also worries that a defense shield might violate the ABM Treaty, the same pact the Soviets violated for years.

Mr. Speaker, each day we delay, the threat of a missile attack increases. Congress is taking action to deploy an effective missile defense system. I urge the President to join us in addressing this critical matter of national security.

NATIONAL POLICE OFFICERS WEEK

(Mr. FOSSELLA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, this is National Police Officers Week. I rise today to pay tribute and offer my thanks to the law enforcement officers throughout our Nation who stand at the front line protecting the American people.

These brave men and women risk their lives every day so that our community may be safe, that our children, parents, and grandparents need not live in fear of criminals.

All too often, we see the tragic consequences that come with such awesome responsibility. Hundreds of times each year, America is forced to confront the horror that one of our finest has lost his or her life.

We mourned as a Nation last year when two officers who worked right here, Officers Gibson and Chestnut, were killed trying to protect innocent tourists when a madman entered the United States Capitol with his guns blazing.

Where I live, on Staten Island, we experienced loss twice last year, and our community still grieves for Police Officer Sal Mosomillio and Officer Gerald Carter, both of whom made the ultimate sacrifice.

I can use words like hero, courage and bravery to describe these two men, but the truth is that no words can truly do them justice. In fact, I think both officers would be embarrassed by such descriptions because, in their minds, they were only doing their job.

The same could be said of Police Officer Matthew Dziergowski, a dedicated official who was killed earlier this year and has left one son and his wife who was pregnant at the time he lost his life.

Mr. Speaker, the New York City Police Department right now and the men and women who serve our city every day are under constant attack. The morale is at an all-time low. But let them know and let them stand assured that there are a lot of people out there who appreciate the job they do, the